

**In the claims:**

**Claim 1 (original):** A method for service allocation among a plurality of entities requiring service allocation in a communications or computing environment comprising the steps of:

- a) initializing a supply of services of one or more holding entities;
- b) endowing one or more bidding entities with ~~an adjustably~~ a fixed amount of utility and a requirement for an amount of said supply of services, wherein said fixed amount of utility ~~is a measure representative of~~ represents less than, equal to, or more than the amount of said supply of services the entity could require to function at a particular time, said fixed amount of utility thereby also represents the possibility of failure due to a lack of resources;
- c) negotiating said supply of services of said holding entities, with each bidding entity bidding a selected amount of its said fixed amount of utility;
- d) redistribution of said supply of said holding entities among said bidding entities based on said negotiating.

**Claim 2 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said supply of services is comprised of a plurality of resources.

**Claim 3 (previously presented):** The method of claim 2, wherein said plurality of resources are available at multiple service levels.

**Claim 4 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said initializing, said endowing, said negotiating and said redistribution operate dynamically in response to a change in said supply of services, said fixed amount of utility or said requirement for said supply of services.

**Claim 5 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said redistribution of said supply represents a guarantee of service.

**Claim 6 (previously presented):** The method of claim 2, wherein said resources are one or more physical devices.

**Claim 7 (previously presented):** The method of claim 3, wherein said multiple service levels includes said resources available at varying levels of quality.

**Claim 8 (previously presented):** The method of claim 3, wherein said multiple service levels includes said resources available at varying capacities.

**Claim 9 (previously presented):** The method of claim 3, wherein said multiple service levels are determined by resource sets.

**Claim 10 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said redistribution is done deterministically.

**Claim 11 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said redistribution is done statistically.

**Claim 12 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein said redistribution is based upon a proportion of said supply held by said holding entity using a holding price.

**Claim 13 (previously presented):** The method of claim 12, wherein said proportion is described by the formula:

$R_c (1 - P_c / P_b)^{\text{exp}}$ , wherein  $R_c$  is the current allocation of resource to agent,  $P_c$  is the current holding price of resource as held by an individual agent,  $P_b$  is the bid price and exp is an exponent.

**Claim 14 (original):** The method of claim 13, wherein  $\text{exp}=0.5$ .

**Claim 15 (previously presented):** The method of claim 1, wherein each said bidding entity is represented by an agent.

**Claim 16 (previously presented):** The method of claim 15, wherein each said supply of services is represented by an agent.

**Claim 17 (previously presented):** The method of claim 16, wherein said holding entity is represented by an agent.

**Claim 18 (previously presented):** The method of claim 6, wherein said physical devices are a plurality of telephones, telephone interface circuits, trunk interface circuits, telephone lines and telephone switches for establishing or maintaining a voice or data communication.

**Claim 19 (original):** A system for service allocation among a plurality of entities requiring service allocation in a communications or computing environment comprising:

a) one or more holding entities having a supply of services;

b) a plurality of bidding entities endowed with ~~an adjustable~~ a fixed amount of utility and a requirement for an amount of said supply of services, wherein said fixed amount of utility is a measure representative of represents less than, equal to, or more than the amount of said supply of services the entity could require to function at a particular time, said fixed amount of utility thereby also represents the possibility of failure due to a lack of resources;

c) a broker in communication with said holding entities and said bidding entities for negotiating said supply of said holding entities, with each bidding entity bidding a selected amount of its said fixed amount of utility;

wherein said holding entity provides redistribution of said supply among said bidding entities based on said negotiating.

**Claim 20 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said supply of services is comprised of a plurality of resources.

**Claim 21 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said plurality of resources are available at multiple service levels.

**Claim 22 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said holding entities, said bidding entities and said broker operate dynamically in response to a change in said supply of services, said fixed amount of utility or said requirement for said supply of services.

**Claim 23 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said redistribution of said supply represents a guarantee of service.

**Claim 24 (previously presented):** The system of claim 20, wherein said resources are one or more physical devices.

**Claim 25 (previously presented):** The system of claim 21, wherein said multiple service levels include said resources available at varying levels of quality.

**Claim 26 (previously presented):** The system of claim 21, wherein said multiple service levels including resources available at varying capacities.

**Claim 27 (previously presented):** The system of claim 21, wherein said multiple service levels are determined by resource sets.

**Claim 28 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said redistribution is done deterministically.

**Claim 29 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said redistribution is done statistically.

**Claim 30 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein said redistribution is based upon a proportion of said supply held by said holding entities using a holding price.

**Claim 31 (presently amended):** The system of claim 30, wherein said proportion is described by the formula:

$R_c (1 - P_c / P_b)^{\text{exp}}$ , wherein  $R_c$  is the current allocation of resource to agent,  $P_c$  is the current holding price of resource as held by an individual agent,  $P_b$  is the bid price and exp is an exponent.

**Claim 32 (original):** The system of claim 31, wherein  $\text{exp}=0.5$ .

**Claim 33 (previously presented):** The system of claim 19, wherein each said bidding entity is represented by an agent.

**Claim 34 (previously presented):** The system of claim 33, wherein each said supply of services is represented by an agent.

**Claim 35 (previously presented):** The system of claim 34, wherein said holding entity is represented by an agent.

**Claim 36 (previously presented):** The system of claim 24, wherein said physical devices are a plurality of telephones, telephone interface circuits, trunk interface circuits, telephone lines and telephone switches for establishing or maintaining a voice or data communication.